

Six family members killed as explosion rocks Rivers neighbourhood

Dennis Naku, Port Harcourt

SIX members of the same family lost their lives in a fire incident in Ngbede community in the Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State.

However, a 70-year-old man, Pa Fidelis Ezinne, who survived the inferno, said some of the victims were his children and grandchildren.

Ezinne said he heard an explosion from the generator in one of the rooms in the house around 6.30pm.

He said, "I was sitting outside before my freezer blow. Then what we saw was an explosion which got everybody wounded.

"This was around 6.30pm to 7pm. About six people died: my son and his wife, their child, my wife's daughter, and one other person.

"If the government wants to help, let them come and help me."

An eyewitness, who identified himself as Eric, said the explosion might have

been caused by an electric fault where a refrigerator was connected to a stabiliser.

"I was outside the house just along the road when we heard people screaming fire.

"Before we got there, everything had happened. We rushed those affected to the hospital, but they didn't make it," he added.

The commander of OSPAC, a vigilance group in the area, Godknows Nkem, said the incident was regrettable.

"The loss of six able men and women is unfortunate," he stated.

In a related development, fire destroyed goods and property worth millions of naira at the Etche waterfront in the Borokiri axis of Port Harcourt on Christmas Day.

Though the cause of the fire had yet to be ascertained, it was gathered that it occurred when residents were celebrating the Yuletide.

Our correspondent reports that this is the 10th fire incident being recorded in the state in the last three months.